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SUBJECT Consolidation of Baltic Railway Administrations/
Extent of Military Control

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Consolidation of Baltic Railways

1. "The railways of the three Baltic Soviet republics - Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania - are no longer subordinated separately to the All-Union Ministry of Communications in Moscow. They were merged into one administration - the Baltic Railways - in spring 1953. The republican administrations were kept on as subordinate agencies of the Baltic Railways Administration, but have no direct contact with Moscow.
2. "The chief of the Estonian administration is Aleksei Yermolaievich Kotov, born 1910, a colonel of railway traffic, who has held his post since 1949. He is a railway engineer by training and was graduated from the Leningrad Railway Transport Engineering Institute in 1935. Although a Russian from the Smolensk oblast, he was elected member of the Central Committee of the Estonian CP in September 1952.
3. "At all the larger stations of the Baltic railways there are 'political departments'. These conduct the political education of the railwaymen and watch their political attitude and the general spirit on the railways.

Extent of Military Control

4. "In addition to the Ministry of Communications the Soviet railways are subjected to military authority. In every military district there is a chief of the railways. The military chief of the Baltic Railways is I. A. Shmel, Major-General of the engineering services in the Leningrad military district. His official title is Chief of the Northwestern Railways.
5. "In case of mobilization or the proclamation of a state of war all the railways of the USSR will be declared under martial law, which implies the following:
 - (a) All workers and employees of the railways, irrespective of age and sex, are considered conscripts and detailed to work in the railway traffic.

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- (b) All workers and employees of the railways are as liable for offences in service as persons on active service
- (c) All offences committed in railway traffic are tried in military tribunals of the railways according to martial law.
- (d) The military tribunals of the railways have the right to inflict the severest penalties on offenders in service and to send them to the penal companies at the front where they may redeem their faults by their behaviour and bravery.

These regulations have been made known to all railwaymen."

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